

**TESTIMONY OF CHRISTINE DOMBKOWSKI SUBMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON FEBRUARY 24, 2015**

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***H.B. No. 6824 An Act Concerning the State Budget For the Biennium Ending  
June Thirtieth 2017, and Making Appropriations Thereafter and Other Provisions  
Related to Revenue***

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Christine Dombkowski, appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **H.B. No. 6824-An Act Concerning the State Budget For the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, and Making Appropriations Thereafter and Other Provisions Related to Revenue**. It is imperative that the funding for the CT AHEC Network be restored (\$456K).

AHEC provides a valuable resource to Windham High School through the Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC) program, a health career exploration and service learning program implemented in High Schools across Connecticut. As an after school program coordinator at Windham High School, I have personally witnessed the impact that the YHSC program has on our students, school and community.

The YHSC program provides our students opportunities to learn about careers in the health field and have hands on experience that they do not otherwise have access to. The program provides personalized interactions and guidance with students.

AHEC is based at the University of Connecticut Health Center and is implemented through four regional centers located in the Willimantic, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport areas. The four centers enable the AHEC Program to carry out local programs with great efficiency. As a statewide program, it functions locally to provide high quality, efficient, effective and flexible services that meet local needs.

Fiscal support for AHEC is as diverse as its programs with state, federal, foundation and private support. Withdrawal of state support will jeopardize these other resources. In an era of healthcare transformation, maintaining the \$456,000 AHEC line item in the 2015-2017 Connecticut State Budget is critical to assure that the CT AHEC Network will be there to deliver its unique services and programs to our residents as it creates the diverse, well trained and cost effective interprofessional healthcare workforce that Connecticut requires and deserves.